

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank the Examiner for his careful review of this application. Claims 1-48 have been rejected. Claims 49-66 remain pending. Claims 1-48 have been cancelled. Claims 49-66 are new. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the pending claims and the following remarks submitted in support thereof.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103:

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-6, 11-17, 19-22, 26-33, 35-38, and 43-48 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cohen et al. (US Pat. 6,507,845 B1) (Cohen) in view of U.S. Patent 6,426,761 B1 to Kanevsky et al. (Kavensky). Claims 1-48 have been cancelled. Moreover, the teachings of Cohen do not teach each element of independent claims 49 and 60 of the currently claimed invention. Independent claim 49 defines a graphical display interface portal. The graphical display interface portal includes a document display area of a user interface display screen, the document display area defining a currently active data object for a user. A neighborhood panel is presented on the user interface display screen along side with the document display area. The neighborhood panel is concurrently illustrated when the currently active data object for the user is present. The neighborhood panel includes a list of one or more users and a list of one or more data objects and the list of one or more users is automatically displayed in the neighborhood panel. Each user in the list of one or more users is selected for display based on the relationship between the user and the currently active data object. The relationship is defined by a metric. The list provides an accessible link to the users and data objects that are most related to the currently active data object.

In contrast, Cohen teaches a method for improving collaborative working among a group of people working together on a project or task involving a defined set of documents. In Cohen, the task is the project that a team is involved in. The method in Cohen provides a method to improve awareness of a status of a task by storing a first set of data representing a plurality of users involved in the task and a second set of data representing a plurality of data objects. According to Cohen, the plurality of users are the individuals that make up the team and the data objects are the documents or files involved in the task. The method in Cohen provides the individual user a way to get an update of the progress of the task by displaying the activity data in two separate windows or regions simultaneously. A first region contains a list of the plurality of users in association with an activity performed by each of the users concurrently or most recently. The second region contains a list of the plurality of data objects in association with an activity performed upon each of the plurality of data objects concurrently or most recently. Thus two windows provide a comprehensive awareness of the current or most recent activities performed by the users in the team as well as the current or most recent activity performed upon each of the documents involved in the project or task (Column 3, lines 26-37). In other words, the individuals involved in the project can get an update of the work done by the other individuals involved in the project and can access the files that need to be worked on. Furthermore, in Cohen, the clients further have a set of collaboration software tools, which interface with the applications and tool bar to allow users to select other users and documents in the displayed tool bars and to initiate collaborative work with other users or manipulation of documents (column 5 lines 11-15).

In contrast, the claimed invention provides any user access to related objects and users. These related objects and users are determined using a metric, which depends on different variables. The related objects are not restricted to a particular task and to particular

users. The Examiner asserts that Cohen uses a metric system to define related items.

Applicants respectfully traverses the Examiner's characterization in this regard because the portion of the reference relied upon by the Examiner (FIG. 3, Column 3, lines 1-5 and Column 6, lines 6-9) does not disclose the use of a metric to identify the related items. In fact, the method involves the step of storing a first of set of data representing a plurality of users involved in the task and a second set of data representing a plurality of data objects. Moreover, the two sets of data representing users and data objects may be generated by one of the users by selecting a group of users from among a larger group (column 3, lines 4-6), i.e. selecting the few that are involved in a particular project. Therefore, the data that are being stored are pre-selected by one of the users. Cohen essentially brings together the people working as a team on a project. The stored data helps to achieve the smooth flow of a particular project.

In addition, in Cohen, the user establishes the tasks by creating a task object and associating it with a select number of documents involved in the task and a select number of users to be allocated to the task. The number of users to be allocated to a task is not the same as the metric taught in the claimed invention, as asserted by the Examiner. What Cohen is teaching is that the number of people and the documents needed to complete a task is predefined so that the people who are assigned to the tasks can keep track of the status of the tasks and collaborate with one another to work effectively. In the claimed invention, the number of users and the objects are all dynamic, are not predefined, and are not directed to a particular task as in Cohen. As such, in the claimed invention, there is no need for collaboration tools to interface with the applications and tool bar to allow users to select other users and documents in the displayed tool bars.

The Examiner acknowledges that Cohen fails to teach composing a list of one or more related items and selecting the related item from said list. The Examiner then cites Kavensky asserting that it would have been obvious to modify the method in Cohen by including the method described in Kavensky

For the claimed invention to be obvious in view of the combination of prior art, the prior art must suggest the desirability and obviousness of making the combination proposed by the Examiner. Kavensky provides a method and apparatus for generating GUIs for a variety of “desktop” and web browser applications that implements fractal geometries for organizing items such as icons, windows, pull down menus, text and any other graphically represented information (Column 3, lines 39-43). As can be seen, Kavensky is limited to applications that implements fractal geometries. Moreover, according to Kavensky, the system of the invention organizes icons, web links, text, etc. presented on GUI so that related or relevant information is presented in a useful manner. Kavensky basically shows a way of presenting information on a computer terminal or a display monitor.

Unlike Kavensky, the claimed invention teaches a method of accessing related items is provided. The method includes displaying a currently active object in a display area. A list of related items are concurrently displayed in a neighborhood panel linked to the document display area so that a user may access the related documents. The list of related items are automatically generated based on a metric and so the user has access to these related documents while the currently active object is being displayed. The user is presented with the list of related items so that the user can select from the list provided. As described above, Kavenski is not teaching the claimed invention instead Kavenski teaches to combine related objects presented on a GUI.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the reference or in the knowledge generally available, to one having ordinary skill in the art, to combine the references. Additionally, the references when combined must teach or suggest all the claim features. As discussed above, Cohen does not disclose or suggest composing a list of one or more related items i.e. users or objects, based on a relationship between the users, the users and the objects, and two objects defined by a metric. There is nothing in Kavensky that would have cured any of the deficiencies pointed out above with respect to Cohen. Therefore, even if it is deemed that there would have been a proper motivation to combine the references, a proposition with which Applicants disagree, the resulting combination would not include all the claimed features of the independent claims of the claimed invention.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicants submit that independent claims 49 and 60 are patentable under 35. U.S.C § 103, at least for the above-stated reasons. Furthermore, dependent claims 50-59 and 61-66 each of which directly or indirectly depends from amended independent claims 49 and 60 are submitted to be patentable under 35.U.S.C § 103 (a) over Cohen for the reasons set forth above. As a result, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the 35.U.S.C § 103 (a) rejections.


Claims 7-9, 23-25, 39-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Cohen and Kavensky and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,678,882 B1 to Hurley et al (Hurley). Those claims have been cancelled.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims 49-66 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance is

respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions concerning the present Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at (408) 774-6926. If any additional fees are due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, the Commissioner is also authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0805 (Order No. SUNMP406). A duplicate copy of the transmittal is enclosed for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
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